

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully acknowledge receipt of the Office Action mailed March 28, 2006.

In the Office Action, the Examiner: (1) rejected claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Spehrley, Jr. et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,751,528); (2) rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Spehrley* in view of *Hoshino* (U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2004/0041893); and (3) objected to claims 2, 3, 6, and 7 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but allowable if rewritten in independent form.

By this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 2 and 4-6 and cancel claim 1, without prejudice or disclaimer. After entry of this Amendment, claims 2-7 will remain pending. Of these claims, claims 2 and 6 are independent.

The originally-filed specification, claims, abstract, and drawings fully support the amendments to claims 2 and 4-6. No new matter has been introduced.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2, 3, 6, and 7. Consequently, Applicants have rewritten claims 2 and 6 in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 1, and have cancelled claim 1. Accordingly, independent claims 2 and 6 are in condition for allowance. In addition, claims 3-5 and 7 are in condition for allowance at least due to their corresponding dependence from claims 2 and 6.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) REJECTION

Claims 1 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Spehrley*. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

With respect to claim 1, the rejection has been rendered moot in view of the cancellation of claim 1, without prejudice or disclaimer. Additionally, although Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Examiner's rejection, Applicants have rewritten claims 2 and 6 in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 1. Accordingly, independent claims 2 and 6 are in condition for allowance. In addition, claims 3-5 and 7 are in condition for allowance at least due to their corresponding dependence from claims 2 and 6.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) REJECTION

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Spehrley* in view of *Hoshino*. As noted above, Applicants have rewritten claims 2 and 6 in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 1 and have cancelled claim 1. Accordingly, claim 4 is in condition for allowance at least due to its dependence from allowable claim 2. Consequently, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

III. CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 2 and 6 are in condition for allowance. In addition, claims 3-5 and 7 are in condition for allowance at least due to their corresponding dependence from claims 2 and 6.

The Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and the related art with which Applicants do not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicants decline to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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